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SALE OF TIMBER ON CERTAIN LANDS IN WISCONSIN.

APRIL 14, 1892.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. LYNCH, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 8098.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to which was referred House bill 8098, respectfully reports that it has considered the same and finds as per Senate Executive Document No. 16, which is hereby referred to, that the Interior Department has endeavored to sell the dead and down timber belonging to the Chippewa Indians on the Lac du Flambeau, La Pointe (or Bad River), and Lac Court Oreilles reservations, in the State of Wisconsin; and that such timber can not be sold separately or apart from the green and live timber on said reservations, for the reason that it is too much scattered and would require too much of an outlay, in the making of roads, building camps, bridges, etc., for the purpose of logging the same, for the amount of such timber to be had, and that the Interior Department is unable to sell such timber for its value, or anything like it.

The Secretary of the Interior has no authority under the law to sell all of the timber on such reservations, and he believes it to be for the best interests of the Indians to have all such timber sold, and the money held in trust by the Government for them, and therefore asks for appropriate legislation enabling him to do so.

This bill was prepared by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in order that the timber might be sold, as the Indians are in a very destitute condition and have no available funds of any kind.

The whole quantity of timber is valued or appraised at a little more than \$600,000, which would indicate that the quantity of timber is not great, and, extending over three reservations, is necessarily very much scattered and worth less for that reason. It is also in danger of being destroyed by forest fires, which occur very frequently on those reservations and destroy a large quantity of timber each time they occur.

Hence the committee, agreeing with the Secretary of the Interior and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, deem it for the best interests of the Chippewa Indians that the Secretary of the Interior be authorized, in his discretion, and under such regulations as he may think best, to sell all such timber, or so much thereof as they may think for the best interests of the Indians, and recommend the passage of this bill.